The Charleston Gazette, Tu

Fish of Watoga Lake Swim to Greenbrier

State Parks Supervisor Plans to Rebuild Collapsed Dam

An earthern dam, at Watoga state park, which collapsed and drained a six-acre lake will be rebuilt, the conservation department said yesterday.

About 15,000 cubic yards of earth were washed out and most of the fish in the lake were carried into the Greenbrier river. Linn Wilson, parks supervisor, said there was no other damage to state property. Watoga park is in Pocahontas county near Marlinton.

Pocahontas-3

On last Friday night WCKY, a popular radio station, of Cincinnati, gave a fifteen minute broadcast, devoted to Pocahontas County, sponsored by the Pocahontas Times. Here is the script submitted and mostly used.

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I am appreciativs of the opportunity to put West Virginia in general in its right light before the world by presenting in particular my own delectible part, Pocahontas County in the Greenbrier Valley. You know, West Virginia has suffered not a little through adverse advertising. Why our mountain people—gentle and forbearing as the sheep upon our thousands of hills—are pictured as fretful, feverish and quick on the trigger. The fact is that no where in all the world is higher regard placed upon the sanctity of human life than among us. Naturally, human nature and original sin being what they are, it occasionally happens there arises in our midst an anti-social, demon possessed individual who needs killing. Of a truth the highland man is not one to stand aside from the performance of a duty, even though it be personally distasteful.

Speaking of our mountain people, it has been said that what the lowlander considers shrewd business practice, is put down as plain rascality by us highlanders.

Some of you may have heard this old toast to West Virginia—"With the gas to light the world; with coal to heat the world; with oil to grease the world; with timber to put a high board fence around the world; and with brains to run the world." That old boy took in a bit of territory, about all there is, I will admit, but then a highlander usually feels expansive when he gets among the lowlanders.

Still speaking of our people, it has been said that they are like wild hogs in that they will eat each other, but let an outside force attack, the first squeal will bring the herd packing to his help.

Our County of Pocahontas—"lying on the bosom of the Alleghanies like a jewel in the hands of a queen" is known to fame as one of the shires of the Greenbrier Valley. However, the Greenbrier is merely one of the eight sister rivers having their head springs in this mountain domain of a thousand square miles—the Greenbrier, Shavers Cheat, Tygart, Elk, Gauley, Cherry, Williams and Cranberry. Then the head streams of the Potomac begin where Pocahontas leaves off at the north and the drainage to the noble James is from the long eastern boundary. Here is the high county of eastern America, and it is our proud boast Pocahontas receives drainage from no man's land; our water comes straight down clean from the clouds of heaven.

By the terms of the treaty of Albany, in 1722, between Great Britain and the Six Nations, the lands on the Western Waters, that is the Mississippi Drainage, were retained by the Indians as their own. Indians venturing east of the Alleghanies would forfeit all their rights, to be sold as slaves in the West Indies. The white man who ventured on to the Western waters could be killed with impunity by the Indian owners. Beginning two hundred years back, the white people did come and they stayed, though outlawed by King and Council, Colonial Governor and General Assembly, and so actively opposed by the original inhabitants, the region has the bloodiest Indian history of any portion of America. There is a valley saying about the farms, "that they were taken from the forest with an axe and held against all comers with a rifle." Land titles could not be perfected until the formation of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1776, and to this day the best land title in West Virginia is ten years uninterrupted possession. The late Colonel Theodore Roosevelt wrote interestingly and comprehendingly of the Western Waters Movement in his Winning of the West books.

The Warrior's Road—the war path of J. Fenimmore Cooper's Leather Stocking Tales, from Seneca Lake, New York, to the Red Hills of North Georgia—traverses the Greenbrier Valley from end to end. U. S Route 219 is called the Seneca Trail. The town of Marlinton, county seat of the County of Pocahontas, is the first English speaking settlement in the Mississippi Valley. General Andrew Lewis in 1751, when he came to make the first land survey on the Western waters, found Jacob Marlin and Stephen Sewell here. One of the calls of his survey is a line passing over the Ewing house. The stump of the first corner tree on all the Great Mississippi Valley is still preserved.

The then Colonel was surveying out grants totalling one hundred thousand acres for the Greenbrier Land Company. This Company had fooled the King and his Council into believing the waters of the Greenbrier drained toward the Atlantic instead of the Gulf of Mexico. Maybe you think the Indians through the Long House at Albany did not get busy to have the Charter of the Greenbrier Company annulled in a few years.

Inasmuch as more than two-thirds of the area of Pocahontas County is now held in public ownership in the Monongahela National Forest, I feel no hesitancy in making report to the general public on their communal holdings in these parts. The matter of public hunting ground and free fishing waters has come to the front in the past few years with disconcerting suddenness. This popular side line of the all important and too long neglected necessity of saving trees and water and soil sure put the push behind the great Conservation movement as we now know and glory in. The right to hunt is an American tradition ranking with freedom of speech and assembly, the right to bear arms and the right of petition. Unrestrained exercise of this traditional right to hunt the public owned game killed the goose which laid the golden egg so that two generations of Americans have had poor hunting. In your Monongahela National Forest the game is coming back apace, but do not get the idea it is an easy, lazy man's task to hunt the wild deer of our endless mountains, though he make his bed within a mile of our Court House.

Speaking about Conservation of our natural resources of timber, soil and water, I heard over the air a scientific gentleman down Washington way, remark in effect the central Government, for the good of all the people had the right to say to the man of West Virginia how he should till or refrain from tilling his hillside acres. The sentiment did not go down at all with me. I was reared in the good old free school which taught a man held dominion over his own land, to bid a King to stay off if he so desire, and that he owned down to where he would meet Chinamen coming this way, and from here to the moon. Would I stand for any bureaucrat to tell me how I should manage old Jerico farm, from whose sacred soil men had gone at call of country to Indian, Revolutionary and Confederate wars? Sober second thought brought me to see clearly I had no right to so till my hillside acres as to impoverish a soil upon which I hold merely a life tenure at best; to put in condition where a dashing rain would mud up the waters of Price Run, and thicken the drinking water of those who depend upon the rivers for this necessity of life; to add to the distress in times of drouth and flood of our neighbors in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys.

Having an elevation above sea level ranging from two thousand to forty-eight hundred feet, Pocahontas County has an ideal summer climate. The tree growth of the higher elevations is what the foresters call the Northern hardwood mixture, such as hard maple, ash, cherry, beech and birch, with the black spruce on the higher mountains. On the lower grounds are the oaks and pines. As for the rest of the botany, it is most interesting for here we have an overlapping of the Carolinian, Virginian and Canadian species of plants. Those words bring up a sour recollection. A stranger came into the office for to modestly inquire of the flora and fauna of this region. I started off on a high and airy flight about Carolinian meaning southern, Virginian

meaning middle and Canadian meaning northern when applied to plants and animals. I was thoroughly enjoying the clear sailing until the gentleman began to interpose some remarks of his own: Man, I said, what do you know about botany anyhow? Only so much, he replied, as to enable me to hold position with the Biological Survey the past thirty five years as a botanist. When he told me his name I recalled it as an outstanding one in the world of Science. With the little breath remaining in my deflated bladder, I told him about taking advantage of ignorant innocence. He said I had laid myself vulnerable, and I acknowledged the corn.

Anyway, the Greenbrier Valley is the botanist's happy hunting ground, and the same may be said for the Geologist. The rock here is sedimentary and the folded mountains expose the foundations for miles, up and down. A Geologist from the low lands once told me the great week end out door sport for a party of Scientists was to go into the fields in search of fossils. A score would go into a huddle over a stone to see whether the marks were fossils, glacial scars or merely harrow scratches. Here he saw steam shovels at work dumping wonderful fossil remains over the bank by the cubic yard day after day. Another of our local sayings is that you cannot raise good people on poor ground. Ours is natural blue grass soin; our mountains grass to the top; it is an ideal land for cattle and sheep, as well as for people. As for sheep, the pesky varments put a crimp in this industry when the Conservation Commission put the black bear on the song bird list. As for the cattle, it has been said the god of the Greenbrier is a red steer calf on the butt of a hay stack, and that our women still talk horse.

As for our people I readily admit that the best people to be found anywhere live in the Greenbrier Valley, and the farther upstream the better they get. A proper sense of modesty restrains me from explaining how close to the head springs is my own ancestral home.

The meaning of rigmarole is that, imbued with proper missionary spirit we are willing to share the blessings of a good country, a good climate and a sturdy people. Anyway, whether you can see your way clear to cast your lot in with us in these delectible endless mountains and be content to watch the world go by, why pay a visit to the vacation land of the Greenbrier Valley, to see the County of Pocahontas. More than two thirds of it is owned by all the people of these United States. What we have to stand all our lives, you ought to be able to put up with and enjoy for a day or two.

Pocahontas Times
- 8/22/40

(LAKES, RIVERS, AND MOUNTAINS)

Pocahontas County

LAKES

Q Name of lake or lakes in your county?

A Seneca Lake, in Seneca State Forest; Killbuck Lake in Watoga State Park

Q Give the origin of name and meaning?

A from Indian Tribe: Seneca; Killbuck, noted bloody Indian Chief

Q Is the lake a natural or an artificial one?

A artificial

Q If an artificial lake, was it constructed for a power project?

A No

Q If so, give name of company operating power rights?

A

Q To whom is power furnished?

A

Q What acreage does the lake cover, together with its depth?

A Seneca 6 acres; Killbuck 12 acres

Q What highways (State and Federal) are nearest the lake?

A US 219

Q Give a list of different kinds of sport and recreation facilities to be had?

A Fishing & boating & camping

(GIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

But County in State for Hunting & Fishing

(LAKES, RIVERS, AND MOUNTAINS)

RIVERS

Q Name of river or rivers running through your county?

A Greenbrier, Cheat, Elk, Tygarts Valley, Williams
Cherry, Gauley, Cranberry

Q Give origin and meaning of name?

A Cheat origin & name not really known
Gaule from ancient name of France

Q Give point of entry in your county and point of exit?

A Rivers are nine here

Q What is the total length of the river in the State?

A ~~Elk~~ Greenbrier 170 miles
Elk 180

Q What percentage of total mileage flows through your county?

A Elk about ~~20~~ 20 miles
Greenbrier about 40%

Q Is power generated by the erection of dams, or are there power possibilities?

A no power generated, but good power possibilities

Q If power is generated, give name of company operating power rights?

A

Q If river is navigable, give length?

A no

Q Give sport facilities, such as boating, swimming and fishing?

A bass, trout + pike fishing (Good)

(GIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

The above Rivers all head in Pocahontas County and no River or creek runs through the County all head in the County

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(LAKES, RIVERS, AND MOUNTAINS)

MOUNTAINS

Q Name of mountain or mountains in your county?

A Allegheny Mountains, Back Allegheny Mountains, Greenbrier Mountain + Cheat Mt

Q Meaning of name?

A Indian for big sign, Allegheny - Cheat Mountain (Indian meaning deceiving)

Q Give the location in your county? A. all over

Q What highways (State and Federal) are nearest the mountain?

A 219

Q Give a description of the mountain, whether wooded or not, and point of highest elevation? Mostly wooded; range in elevation from 2100 to 4800 feet

A

Q If mountain is heavily timbered, what kind is found?

A Northern hardwood mixture with spruce + white pine

Q Is mountain a recreation center?

A Yes

Q If so, what?

A Hunting and fishing

(GIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

Moody Kincaid Clerk
County Court

J. N. ALDERSON
ADMINISTRATOR

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OF WEST VIRGINIA

312 Smallridge Building
Charleston

February 15, 1939

Clerk County Court
Marlinton
West Virginia

Dear Sir:

The Federal Writers' Project is compiling material on all the counties for a West Virginia Encyclopedia. For the present, we are interested in obtaining information from your county on lakes, rivers and mountains.

Enclosed are three lists of questions to which we would like to have you give brief but comprehensive answers at your convenience. If you do not have the data at hand, will you please turn the lists over to someone else who is familiar with these particular subjects?

We will be glad to hear from you and will appreciate whatever you may do for us.

Very truly yours,

Bruce Crawford

Bruce Crawford
State Director
Federal Writers' Project

BC/cap
enc.

MARLIN OR "HUNTERSVILLE" ANTICLINE

This material probably can be found in the West Virginia Geological Survey for Pocahontas County. I want to know what the Marlin Anticline is, what period it belongs to, what it is composed of, where it is, and on which side of the highway it is, if possible. which route 1 43

There is no "Marlin" or "Huntersville" anticline - Have taken for granted you meant the largest which is Brown Mountain